

Even silence can kill

**In memory of Benedetto Petrone, viciously murdered by Fascists in Bari on 28
November 30 years ago**

Federazione dei Comunisti Anarchici

28 November 2007

On 28th November 1977 a young comrade, Benedetto Petrone, was killed in Bari by a fascist squad. The city reacted with a popular campaign against fascism and reintroduced the best values of the Resistance on a mass level: anti-fascist struggles as anti-capitalist struggles, against the exploitation of one by another, for a society without classes.

That movement came up with the best and most militant response to the vicious murder of comrade Petrone (only two months after the murder of Walter Rossi in Rome) through mass mobilization and direct action.

This mass response was of enormous value, as it pointed out clearly:

1. the need to beat fascism with mass mobilization;
2. that anti-fascist action must not be delegated to the State and its representative organs; not only because fascism and the State go hand in hand; not only because the fascists (in Bari and elsewhere) have no problem in finding protection, but above all because workers, students, women and the unemployed could not, and even today cannot, separate the struggle against fascism from the struggle against unemployment, against isolation, against off-the-books jobs, against price rises, against repression and against freedom-killing laws.

All attempts at criminalizing the movement by means of press terrorism are as ridiculous today as they were in the past.

The action of the movement, which the press and the institutional parties tried to portray as the action of vandals, was directed at the fascists' organizational network: its targets were their organizations' offices, their hang-outs, and shops run by well-known squadristi and criminals.

Even in those years it was clear that fascism could not be defeated only by hitting their organizational network: it was also necessary for neighbourhoods to organize themselves, to set up permanent anti-fascist action networks that could continue the work of continually reminding people what fascism is, of counter-information, of vigilance, of removing all political platforms for fascists, ensuring they cannot use the streets or public places for rallies or other organizational purposes.

Only in this way will Benedetto's death not be in vain. Only this way will his memory live, not only among his comrades who fought alongside him in the struggles but among every exploited person who struggles and who will in the future struggle for freedom from exploitation and oppression.

Mobilization today is still of vital importance if we are to achieve our goal of closing down every fascist den, of preventing them being active in schools and in our neighbourhoods, sowing panic among young people and immigrants, of contributing to the development of everyone's political growth and increasing direct participation. Anti-fascism must not be delegated. Its strength lies in the determination and the abilities of the movement of immigrants, students, workers, women and the unemployed to build and develop a process of radical transformation in society, a process to build a society without classes, a self-managed, egalitarian society.

30 years on, anarchist communists are still firm in their intention to encourage the creation and development of anti-fascist grassroots neighbourhood organizations that are able to mobilize in the struggle against racism, sexism, patriarchal society, chauvinism and bullying that all go towards arming neo-fascism, in the service of the bosses.

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